

House Resolution 722

By: Representatives Keen of the 179th, Richardson of the 19th, Burkhalter of the 50th, and Lane of the 167th

A RESOLUTION

1 Encouraging Governor Sonny Perdue to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to review all
2 aspects of initiatives at Jekyll Island relating to resource stewardship, tourism infrastructure,
3 economic development, land management, and future needs and concerns of the island; and
4 for other purposes.

5 WHEREAS, Jekyll Island was purchased in 1947 by then Governor Melvin E. Thompson
6 through condemnation proceedings for \$675,000 and formally opened as a state park in
7 March of 1948; and

8 WHEREAS, the Jekyll Island State Park Authority was established in 1950 with island
9 access being mainly by boat until a drawbridge was completed in 1954; and

10 WHEREAS, today the island serves more than 1.3 million visitors a year who visit the beach,
11 attend conferences, spend more than \$27 million to occupy rooms at the island's ten hotels,
12 play 85,000 rounds of golf on the beautiful golf courses totaling 63 holes, shop at many of
13 the shops, generate more than \$5 million in sales taxes annually, and generate a local
14 economic impact of more than \$168 million a year; and

15 WHEREAS, more than 600 residential leases exist on the island plus 16 retail leases and ten
16 hotel leases along with 15 miscellaneous leases for such facilities as restaurants, churches,
17 harbor marinas, cable, and telephones; and

18 WHEREAS, state law requires that no more than 35 percent of the island can ever be
19 developed in order to assure that the island's natural, historical, and cultural significance be
20 protected; and

21 WHEREAS, Jekyll Island needs to receive special attention and have all existing plans
22 reviewed and updated through a comprehensive planning initiative that will assess all aspects
23 of the island's resource management programs, stewardship, improvement to tourism,

1 hospitality, and environmental infrastructure, consideration of economic development needs,
2 and land use planning consistent with state law, O.C.G.A. Section 12-3-243, which pertains
3 to the percentage of the island to be preserved from development.

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
5 this body hereby urges Governor Sonny Perdue to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee
6 consisting of a cross section of business people, legislators, and other appropriate citizens to
7 undertake a thorough review of Jekyll Island that will recommend necessary long-term,
8 strategic actions designed to impact positively the operation, maintenance, development,
9 revitalization, resource stewardship, preservation, and conservation of this island gem in
10 order to assure it best serves the people of Georgia and visitors to our state and that the report
11 of this committee should be completed in time for consideration to be given to its
12 recommendations prior to the 2006 convening of the General Assembly.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
14 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Governor Sonny Perdue.